

Michael F. Easley
Governor



State of North Carolina Office of the Governor

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GOV. EASLEY UPDATES OFFICIALS ON PILLOWTEX SITUATION

RALEIGH – Gov. Mike Easley today convened a conference call with federal, state and local officials to update them on the Pillowtex situation. Easley encouraged officials to work through the Rapid Response Team that he established in Kannapolis to ensure a coordinated response to the people impacted by the layoff announced by Pillowtex yesterday. In addition, Easley asked for the Congressional delegation's assistance in expediting a National Emergency Grant from the Bush administration's Department of Labor to help pay for health care insurance for laid-off workers.

"It is critical that we work together at all levels of government to ensure a clear and consistent response to these dislocated workers," said Easley. "We need to make it as simple as possible for them to get the services that they need. These people have worked hard building these communities and we must be there for them now.

"We are going to need everyone's help to get through this time," said Easley. "It is important that we all work together. We must coordinate our response so that we are all singing from the same hymnal, on the same page and in the same pew.

"I want to thank everyone for their aggressive efforts to help these people in need. The good news is that we have many people helping and offering to help."

Commerce Secretary Jim Fain and Roger Shackelford, director of the State's Workforce Development Commission, also briefed the officials on the activities of the Rapid Response Team. Today, the team met with local officials and community service providers to bring together resources available for dislocated workers.

There will be a series of meetings next week. **At these meetings, displaced Pillowtex workers will get information and assistance in filing for unemployment benefits, referral to training programs, job placement assistance and other services from community programs.**

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